

13 January 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

FROM: 

Members, FBIS Expediting Panel

SUBJECT: Comments on Agency Awards Program "Point Paper"

1. Following are some informal comments on the Agency Awards Program "point paper":

a. Increased funding for awards: Excellent idea. However, it is our impression that lack of funding has not been a problem under the current system.

b. Ease administrative burden on managers by making awards easier to recommend: This should be at the heart of the new system and is the one area that needs most attention. It was obvious during discussions within the DDS&T Independent Panel which reviewed the Task Force report that the process for recommending, justifying and approving awards within the various DS&T offices is extremely cumbersome and time-consuming, particularly for managers.

c. Eliminate requirement for SAAC review: Excellent idea. Within reason, the more layers that can be removed from the approval process, the better.

d. Meritorious Unit bonus concept: Excellent idea. Under the current system Unit Citations have little or no meaning in many cases.

e. Increased automation: Good idea but there is no need to wait for a sophisticated automated system to be in place before streamlining the awards process. Much can be done immediately in the individual offices.

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f. More on the automated system: It might be worth considering something like the secretarial award system--where supervisors have to certify that they have considered each secretary for an award--for all employees. If supervisors could sit down at a computer terminal showing a roster of all their employees and indicate yea or nay, it might not be that involved a process, especially if the recommendation and approval process is simplified and streamlined.

g. Alternatives for distributing/controlling award money pool:

1) As noted, distribute based on population of Directorate or Office. This has the advantage of being straightforward. However, it assumes that all the offices within the Directorate are making an equal contribution to meeting the Directorate's goals.

2) Distribute on relative importance attached to the work of each office and on how well each office is meeting its goals. Needless to say, this would be much more controversial than 1 above.

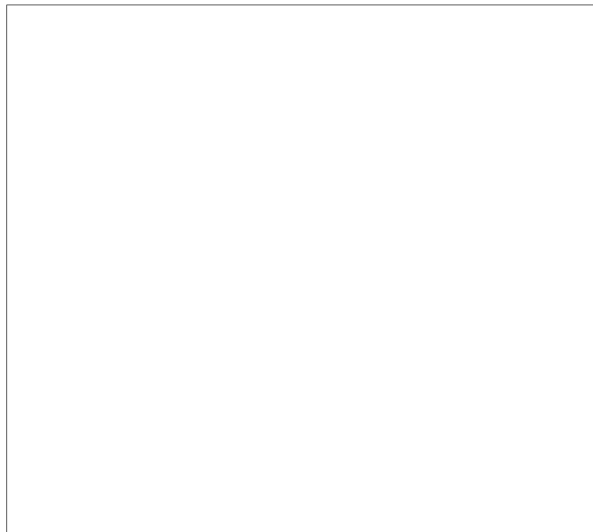
3) Do not distribute the pool, at least initially. Keep control at the DDS&T level. This would have the advantage of allowing each office to focus on streamlining procedures for recommending and approving awards, which is more important at the outset than actual amounts given, assuming we have sufficient funds. Distribute the pool only after each office has set up new procedures for recommending and approving awards and there is a better idea of actual dollar amounts involved.

4) Distribute some of the award pool to the offices by whatever criterion is chosen and keep some of the award pool under the control of the DDS&T. Make offices justify need for additional money based on how original amount delegated was spent and how additional funds would be used.

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5) Regardless of method used to distribute the award pool, the authority to approve specific lump sum amounts should be uniform throughout the Agency, rather than allowing the various Deputy Directors to redelegate approval authority for varying amounts in each Directorate.

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